

The City of Fresno
Draft Master Environmental Impact Report
for the 2025 Fresno General Plan
EIR No. 10130
SCH Log No. 2001071097

Chapter VII – Growth Inducing Impacts

A. BACKGROUND

In accordance with Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must “discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment.” In addition, when discussing growth-inducing impacts of a proposed project, “it must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment” (Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines). Two issues must be considered when assessing the growth-inducing impacts of a project:

- ?? **Elimination of Obstacles to Population Growth:** The extent to which additional infrastructure capacity or a change in regulatory structure will allow additional development in the County and region; and
- ?? **Promotion of Economic Growth:** The extent to which the 2025 Fresno General Plan can cause managed activity in the local or regional economy. Economic impacts can include direct effects, such as the direction and strategies implemented within the City’s Empowerment Zone, and indirect or secondary impacts, such as increased commercial activity needed to serve the Council of Fresno County Government’s population growth forecasts for the City.

B. ELIMINATION OF OBSTACLES TO GROWTH

The elimination of either physical or regulatory obstacles to growth is considered to be a growth-inducing impact. A physical obstacle to growth typically involves the lack of public service infrastructure. The extension of public service infrastructure, including roadways, water mains, and sewer lines, into areas that are not currently provided with these services is expected to support new development. Similarly, the elimination of change in a regulatory obstacle, including existing growth and development policies, can result in new growth.

The 2025 Fresno General Plan policies provide for the expansion of infrastructure to accommodate new growth within the expanded sphere of influence. To the extent that new infrastructure is sized to serve only existing and planned development (including growth related to the 2025 Fresno General Plan), growth inducement will not be considered detrimental to the environment.

C. PROMOTION OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

Increased industrial, commercial, and residential development typically generates a secondary or indirect demand for other services. The City’s growing population will require additional goods and services, such as groceries, entertainment, and medical services that will stimulate economic activity.

Because the 2025 Fresno General Plan will not alter the COG’s population projections, the secondary effects of increased residential demand for goods and services is independent of the project. The 2025 Fresno General Plan will result in greater employment-generating uses that could generate a secondary demand for goods and services to support new and expanding business.

D. SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the 2025 Fresno General Plan will induce additional population growth in the City. However, that growth is not considered to be detrimental to the environment.

Based on population forecasts approved by the COG, the City's population will increase to 725,000 by the year 2020. In addition, the 2025 Fresno General Plan will increase the amount of economic activity resulting from the direction and strategies within the City's Empowerment Zone. Therefore, the 2025 Fresno General Plan will be growth-inducing, but the growth will be consistent with the regional growth forecasts adopted by the Council of Fresno County Governments. The environmental impacts of growth resulting from the 2025 Fresno General Plan are discussed in Chapter V.